

Hamilton does. That same community attempted to create a dialogue with you and come to an agreement about police participation in Pride, but you refused to participate. No matter how much your feelings might be hurt, **you have a responsibility to defend and protect the residents of Hamilton. You failed us. You did not do your job, and your petulance is no excuse.**

At the time this letter is being written, Cedar Hopperton, a member of Hamilton's trans community, is incarcerated in a Milton prison. She is incarcerated because she spoke up against your inaction, because she called Hamilton Police out for not protecting trans and queer people against violence. The role and responsibility of the police in Canadian society is to protect and defend people in Canada against violence and aggression. Instead of protecting trans people, you have arrested queer community members trying to defend us against bigoted violence; you have used your institutions as tools to commit more bigoted violence and to criminalize our dissent.

Mayor Eisenberger, you have repeatedly attacked and derided the members of our community as "fake queers." You have singled out anarchists and activists as not belonging to the queer and trans communities in Hamilton. You are wrong. **You do not decide who belongs to our communities; we do.** Anarchists and activists are the lifeblood of the trans community in Hamilton, and they have dedicated their lives to defending and advocating for us for much longer and much more effectively than you have. Instead, Mayor Eisenberger, you have refused to listen to the trans community (especially trans women), and have surrounded yourself in private meetings with trusted advisors. We see you. We see your refusal to address us squarely. We know you haven't ever attended Hamilton Pride. And we see that the anarchists and the activists are the real defenders of the trans community in Hamilton, the real people working to keep us safe. **We reject your politics, and return to solidarity with our siblings.** We speak on behalf of our entire community, as your policies have made many of us feel unsafe and unable to speak up for ourselves publicly.

As residents of Hamilton, we demand the following actions be immediately taken as a starting point in order to make Hamilton safe once again for trans and gender-diverse people:

- Incarceration is inhumane and we demand the immediate withdrawal of all charges against and release from custody for Cedar and the other trans and queer community defenders you have arrested. Conversely, Hamilton Police Services needs to begin pressing charges against the alt-right combatants at Hamilton Pride, towards rehabilitation and meaningful change, not traumatic incarceration.
- An independent arms-length investigation must be made into Hamilton Police Services' actions regarding Hamilton Pride 2019, the alt-right demonstrations at City Hall, and related events.
- The City of Hamilton must take action to prevent alt-right protestors on city property, and needs to develop a strategy to stop such hateful groups from existing in our city. This strategy must not be used to criminalize or repress trans and queer communities and activists within Hamilton.
- The City must release and commit to its non-discrimination policy against trans and gender diverse residents.
- Mayor Eisenberger and Police Chief Girt, we have no faith in your ability to lead our community out of this trauma. You both need to immediately resign in order for us to move on.

The trans community is done with your lack of leadership. We need better.